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THE WEST THROUGH JAPANESE EYES:
18th AND 19th CENTURY VISIONS

日本人の目でみた西洋

RARE BOOK AND PRINT DISPLAY

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THE WEST THROUGH JAPANESE EYES: 18th AND 19th CENTURY VISIONS

A DISPLAY OF RARE BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS

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In 1600 the newly established Tokugawa Shogunate instituted a policy of isolationism for Japan. Except for a tiny amount of trade with the Dutch at the port of Nagasaki, all contact with foreigners was forbidden, Japanese people were not allowed to travel abroad, and no foreigners were allowed inside Japan. Japan's ideas about the West in the following centuries were formed by what she learned from the Dutch, Jesuit priests, and the odd shipwrecked sailor or two from other European countries who washed up on her shores. Then, in 1853, the world changed completely for Japan when Commodore Perry of the United States steamed into Tokyo Harbor and demanded that Japan open trade with the West. In the decades following this first opening of her closed doors, Japan studied the West, learned with diligence, and began her rapid transformation to an industrialized state.

The maps, books, and prints in this exhibit are a small part of those acquired by BYU from the Harry F. Bruning Collection. They illustrate Japanese ideas about the West during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They are all part of what is known as *namban* culture, literally "southern barbarian" because the first Westerners came via Southeast Asia. This art form experienced two waves of growth and development. The first occurred between the arrival of the Portuguese in 1571, and the closure of Japan by the Tokugawa shogunate in 1639. Namban art had a heavy Christian emphasis which reflected the culture of the Westerners and ended with their persecution. The second wave, emphasized by this display, commenced with the opening of Japan by Perry in 1853. Much of it focuses upon the everyday life of the foreigners.

1. *Chikyū ichiranzu* 地球一覧図
(Map of the World)

Polychrome woodblock print; dated 1783.
78.8 cm x 155 cm

This map was no doubt patterned after those brought to Japan by Western traders. Ignacio Moreira, for example, visited Japan from 1590 to 1592 and helped survey some of the coastal regions of Japan. A mapmaker, he no doubt brought a variety of maps with him. Earlier maps, also in the Bruning Collection, are heavily influenced by Buddhism and integrate imaginary kingdoms into the periphery of what to the Japanese was the "known" world.

2. *Beikoku shisetsu Perī kyōō no zu* 米国使節ペリー饗応の図
(Picture of the entertainment for the American envoy Perry)

Polychrome woodblock print; 1897.
48 cm x 87.5 cm

The Americans, because of their very profitable China Clipper trade were very interested in obtaining supplies and avoiding violence with the hostile Japanese as they passed by Japan. Later, with the introduction of steam ships, the need for coaling stations in Japan also became important. Attempts in 1791, 1797, 1837, 1846, and 1849, by various American interests did not change Japan's official stance toward the West. In 1853, Commodore Matthew C. Perry with three steam frigates and five other ships, then one-fourth of the American Navy, arrived in Japanese waters.

The general consensus among the regional lords of Japan was still to reject the West, but in 1854, Perry returned again and forced negotiations. As a result, two small unimportant ports were opened up. With the pressure from many other nations and the changes going on inside Japan to weaken the isolationist shogunate, Japan gradually opened its doors to the West.

3. *Peruri raikō oboe* ペリー来航の図
(Records of Perry's arrival at the port)

Bound manuscript volume with polychrome hand-painted illustrations; 19 cm x 28 cm.

This manuscript, which dates from 1854, was probably written by a Japanese government official representing the Tokugawa Shogunate at Edo (Tokyo).

No. 4

4. Kanagaki Robun
Gurandō den Yamato bunshō 格蘭氏伝大和文章
(Biography of Grant)

Illustrated by Sensai Eitaben. Tokyo: Tsujioka, 1879.
Three volumes in one case with monochrome and polychrome woodblock prints; 11 cm x 18 cm.

With the opening of Japan, outward trade with the West expanded rapidly, so much so that domestic shortages developed. Rapid inflation followed and dissatisfaction with the shogunate was widespread. A brief civil war brought an end to the shogun government, and the emperor of Japan took power. The early years of his rule were marked by a frenzied Japanese attempt to prove to the foreign nations that Japan was their equal. Since to be equal frequently means becoming the same, the Japanese embraced everything foreign. This immense interest in Western things is reflected in the publication of a three-volume treatment of the life of Ulysses S. Grant, who visited Japan in 1879. A statue of him, cast in honor of the visit, still stands in a quiet corner of Ueno Park in Tokyo.

5. [A Train Station in Tokyo]

Polychrome woodcut triptych; late 19th century; 38 cm x 72.5 cm.

This triptych, and Numbers 20–26 are ukiyo-e or "pictures of the floating world." This style of painting and woodblock printing arose in the seventeenth century and then declined in the nineteenth. The term "floating world" originated with the Buddhist view that the worldly events depicted were ephemeral to man's real meaning and hence floating or unreal. In the beginning, they were costly and the province of the rich but by the end of the nineteenth century they were mass produced and became so common their importance as a form of serious art diminished.

6. [Foreigners in Nagasaki showing Chinese and Dutch People, Costumes and Ships]

Hand colored scroll, dated 1702; 52.5 cm x 4.9 m.

Although the production of woodblock prints was already in vogue among the urban population of Japan in the 1700's, handpainted scrolls of this type continued to be rendered for wealthy Japanese. The portion displayed shows a Chinese-style ship, Chinese people in the costume of the early Ch'ing Dynasty, and a Dutchman with his two servants.

7. *Bankoku jimbutsu zu* 万国人物図
(Pictures of the peoples of all countries)

Two volumes with monochrome woodblock prints; printed in Tokyo, 1720; 19 cm x 27 cm.

Illustrations of the peoples of China, Korea, Okinawa, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Europe in their native dress. Brief annotations give the locations of the countries.

8. *Ikokujin no zu* 異国人の図
(Pictures of foreigners)

Bound volume printed in 1859 with polychrome illustrations; 19 cm x 18 cm.

The Dutch, even during the period of Japanese isolation, remained an important contact with the outside world because they, unlike the more fervent Spanish or Portuguese Catholics, were largely nonproselytizing Protestants and satisfied with trade only. In 1641 they were moved to the tiny island of Deshima in Nagasaki harbor. The study of Europe and its science became known as "Dutch Learning" (Rangaku) because it was only through the official Dutch interpreters that the Japanese learned of the West.

9. *Ikoku rakuyō kago* 異国落葉篭
(Basket for scattered leaves from a foreign country)

Bound volume with polychrome woodblock prints; printed in 1853; 12 cm x 17 cm.

An account of Commodore Perry's visit to Japan. The colored illustrations include pictures of Perry and his attendants, their ship, uniforms, musical instruments, and the strange Western things such as a steamship that they brought with them. The text includes translations of the letters Perry brought with him, the list of gifts exchanged, and a list of Japanese fortresses along the coast.

10. *Ikoku jimbutsu shu* 異国人物集
(People of foreign countries)

Bound volume with monochrome and polychrome illustrations; printed in 1810; 20 cm x 28 cm.

A book of pictures of foreigners whose open pages show Portuguese soldiers.

Tooth-pick.
小楊枝
Tooth pick.
天ノ部
ヘブン
Heaven.
天
Heaven.
チャーチ
Church.
寺院
Church.
バタフライ
Butterfly.
蝶
バタフライ

No. 12

11. Van Reed, Eugene M.
Wa Ei shōwa 和英商話
(Japanese-English commerical conversation)

Yokohama, 1862. Bound volume; 12 cm x 18 cm.

This, the earliest English conversation book published in Japan, was written by an American.

12. *Seiyō ebiki setsuyō shū* 西洋画引節用集
(Illustrated Western vocabulary)

Two volumes with monochrome woodblock prints; 1872;
12 cm x 18 cm.

An English vocabulary book with each word in English accompanied by an illustration, written in longhand and printed forms, the pronunciation given in Japanese syllabary writing, and the meaning written in characters.

13. *Dōkai Eigo zue* 童解英語図絵
(English words with pictures for children)

Bound volume with monochrome woodblock prints; Tokyo, 1871;
12 cm x 17 cm.

Includes more than 150 English words with meanings and illustrations. The first picture book printed in Japan with English words for children.

14. *Yokohama kaikō kembunshi* 横浜開港見聞誌
(Eyewitness accounts of the opening of the port of Yokohama)

Six volumes in one case with monochrome woodblock prints; dated 1863–1865; 17 cm x 24 cm.

Commodore Perry returned to the port of Yokohama in 1854; the actual place where the subsequent negotiations took place was Kanagawa, now a part of Yokohama. The treaty opening the two ports to the Americans was known as the Treaty of Kanagawa.

No. 14

15. [Foreign Military]

Six double-page polychrome prints; one single-page polychrome print in a bound volume; Nagasaki, 19th century.

This book of prints shows foreign soldiers and ships.

16. *Bankoku jimbutsu no zu* 万国人物の図
(Pictures of the peoples of all countries)

Handpainted scroll; ca. 1810; 30 cm x 14 m.

Shows peoples of eleven countries of the world, including several of the Russian ambassadors to Japan. The countries in the portion displayed are, left to right, Russia, Hungary, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Spain.

17. *Bankoku jimbutsu no zu* 万国人物の図
(Pictures of the peoples of all countries)

Handpainted scroll; early 19th century; 30 cm x 7.6 m.

Shows peoples of various countries of the world, including China, Korea, Java, North Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. The countries in the portion displayed are, left to right, [untitled], Holland, Germany, France, and Denmark.

18. Gyofu Kaisei (Tsurumine Shigenobu [1788–1859])
Merikan shinshi 米利幹新誌
(New account of America)

Tokyo, 1855. Five bound volumes in one case with monochrome woodblock prints; 18 cm x 25 cm.

This is reputedly the first printed book in Japanese written exclusively about America. The illustrations show Queen Isabella and Columbus, Columbus sighting America, General Washington, the Battle of Yorktown, Indian wars, scenes of the South American wars of liberation, etc. The text explains the history, government, and customs of the American states.

19. [Barbarian Scrapbook]

Twenty-four page bound volume with polychrome and monochrome woodblock prints; 19 cm x 13 cm.

A collection of materials about the West, probably made soon after Japan's opening to the West in 1853. Its contents are: A map showing defensive positions around the Bay of Osaka in 1854; Drawings of American soldiers and their equipment; Map of the world; Russian ship; Russians arriving in Japan; Defensive positions around the Bay of Tokyo; Table giving the names of the leading men in the American mission to Japan in 1853; Lands and seas of the world; Table listing gifts brought to Japan by Perry; Brothel in the trading quarters of Yokohama; Japanese officials receiving American naval officers February 10, 1854; Color print of an American man and woman; Color print of an American on a horse; Color print of foreign officials on the street; Monochrome print of an American steamship coming into Uraga Bay, June 3, 1853; Color print of Americans at a party; Map of defensive positions along the coast around Tokyo and a list of the names of the samurai responsible for their defense; List of feudal lords responsible for peacekeeping; Color printed triptych of an American outdoor scene including a hot-air balloon.

NAGASAKI PRINTS

Prints 20 through 26 are representative of what are popularly known as Nagasaki-ye or woodcut polychrome prints, printed and published in Nagasaki. This is an off-shoot of the Ukiyo-e school. They emphasize subjects associated with the harbor of Nagasaki including the foreigners who frequented the Dutch trading houses.

20. Yoshiiku
[Russian Man and Woman]

Polychrome woodcut print; 14.5 cm x 9.5 cm.

The Russians were among the first in the eighteenth century to pressure the Japanese to open their doors to trade. Russian and Japanese explorers encountered one another in the Kuril Islands and Sakhalin. Refused negotiations in 1792 and 1804, the Russians raided Japanese northern outposts in 1806 and 1807. Following the opening of Japan, the Russians were the first to establish the principle of extraterritoriality following the model already found in China.

21. Yoshikazu (ca. 1824–1895), a pupil of Kuniyoshi
[Two Dutchmen]

Polychrome woodcut print; 14 cm x 9.5 cm.

22. Yoshikazu
[A Procession of Foreigners in Yokohama with Band and Carriage]

Polychrome woodcut triptych; 14.5 cm x 28.5 cm.

23. Yoshitora (1840–1870), a pupil of Kuniyoshi
[A Frenchwoman on a Horse]

Polychrome woodcut print; 14 cm x 9.5 cm.

24. [A Street Scene near the Harbor in the Takanowa Section of Tokyo]

Polychrome woodcut triptych; 14 cm x 28.5 cm.

25. [An Englishman Saying Goodbye to his Japanese Girlfriend, having left Some Coins by her Pillow as a Parting Gift]

Polychrome woodcut print; 14 cm x 9.5 cm.

This image of the irresponsible Westerner was established early.

26. Kunitora[?]
"An American on a Spree"

Polychrome woodcut print; Tokyo, 1863; 14 cm x 9.5 cm.

27. *Kaigai ibun* 海外異聞
(Strange information from abroad)

Two bound volumes, printed in Tokyo, 1854 with polychrome woodblock print illustrations; 18 cm x 25 cm.

Relates the experiences in California and Mexico from 1841 to 1843 of Hatsutaro and twelve other Japanese castaways following their rescue by a Spanish ship.

No. 26

28. *Hyōryū ki* 漂流記
(Drifting)

Two bound volumes with monochrome woodblock print illustrations; printed ca. 1865; 16 cm x 23 cm.

When Hizoko, the author of the book, was only thirteen, the ship he was on was seriously damaged at sea. Saved by an American ship, Hizoko and his shipmates were taken to San Francisco. This volume records his experiences aboard the drifting ship, in San Francisco, and in other cities during the 1850's.

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